

Mr. Knight will be missed

BY RENEE LEWIN, DMS*

The staff at Duxbury Middle School will be very sorry to lose Jeffrey Knight. He has been a strong force in our school and his presence will be missed. The article in the Clipper reporting the non-renewal of Mr. Knight's contract stated that a middle school principal should "understand how to best run a middle school and is a dynamic leader." It said that we are looking for someone who has a "good grasp on curriculum development." And finally it stated that we need someone who can "keep kids on an even keel" because "behavior can be very challenging at this level." Mr. Knight encompasses all of these qualities and more.

Since his arrival, Mr. Knight has made many positive changes for the students at DMS. When he first came to DMS as assistant principal, discipline was essentially non-existent. He adopted a program entitled "The ABC's," an acronym for "Accountability, Behavior and Character" where students were held accountable for their actions. The guidelines were made clear and if a student broke the rules, fair and consistent action was taken to correct their errors. MCAS testing procedures had also been disorganized and chaotic. Mr. Knight rectified this situation. We believe the importance placed on such organization has also raised students' levels of performance. In addition to organizing MCAS procedures, Mr. Knight has been dedicated to the ongoing process of raising student scores. He implemented a half-year required seventh grade course entitled "Math Connections." He also created Brain Busters where students worked on MCAS sample questions in homeroom in a simulated test environment. Another example of a positive change for DMS is that Mr. Knight systemized a lock down procedure and has fine-tuned our fire drill procedure as well. Under Mr. Knight's leadership and with his encouragement, we have created a positive and safe envi-

PEOPLE G-K

Mr. Knight has worked hard to bring our school community together. He has improved student life with a multitude of endeavors. He encourages school dances. Mr. Knight introduced holiday kick-off parties where students participate in numerous activities such as face painting, arts and crafts, "Dance, Dance Revolution," karaoke, a pizza meal, dancing and sports. He encourages Dragon award nominations where students are awarded for various acts of kindness and caring. Mr. Knight continued with our outdoor education program, Nature's Classroom and honed the organization of the trip to flawless execution. He chaperones our annual weekend ski trip to Sunday River. He supports our eighth grade promotion ceremony and Graduation dance. Mr. Knight organized an Academic Awards Night. He was thrilled with the idea that the entire school community starts the year on common ground. Jeff Knight truly cares about and appreciates his student population.

Not only has Mr. Knight succeeded in bringing our students together, but he also has fostered a positive environment for his staff. He starts every school year with an impassioned speech, gearing the staff up for a positive and exciting school year. He encourages his staff to challenge students with creative projects, cross-curricular activities and other such endeavors.

What is most important is that Mr. Knight truly supports and cares for his entire school community, from teachers to parents to custodial staff to the students to the secretarial staff. He has grown a great deal as an administrator during his four years in Duxbury. Any school will be lucky to have Jeff Knight lead their community. DMS, on the other hand, will suffer an enormous loss when Mr. Knight leaves us. We will miss him.

**This letter also signed by Alison Thomas, Julie Cook, Bridget Stanvitch, Ed Mack, Michael Armandi, Nancy Blumberg, Vicki Mucci, Martha North, Chris Geary, Paul Romano, Nathan Sylvester, Tim Cipriani, Matt Lynch, Ritamarie Benoit, Donna Bryer, Howie Bryer, Kathleen Bernier, Carey Bruce, Debbie Greenglass, Daniel Kenney, Heather Barnett, Nancy Webb, Marylynn Sciretta, Jessica Sullivan, Kristina White, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Lisa Feinberg, Jennifer Worden, Jana Cocio, Shira Limmer, Susan Harrington, Bennet Epstein, Jack Stoddard, John Blake, Erika Clark and Laura Neprud.*